

I sit alone and I
imagine you I cry

outside this window see 8 birds
8 golden finches/tourists and they
balance along
a single
hollyhock

you go through
this house
shutting windows
I opened
to shut out, you say,
the bad

nightair
Traces
of yr haircut

in sink, on floor.

-- Barbara Moraiff

Strafford VT

THE IMMORTALS

the old jazz place
in the French Quarter
New Orleans
those great names
they went back decades
but they were tired
those old blacks
they were tired and old
but they still had style
they pumped it out
it was authentic
they pumped it out
and they
were drinking too like
the rest of us
and in between sets
we all used the same broken toilet to
piss in
and they stood there
hitting on joints
getting ready to
do it again
for 25 or 30 more tourists
the all-white audience.
they were great and they were tired
and they were
overweight
most of them
bald

now almost all of them are dead
and I don't recall the jazz
so much
anymore
only that we all pissed
in the same broken toilet
between sets
their sets.

SIBELIUS AND ETC.

sick on a Friday night while the discos rock of ass
and hip and leg, I'm too sick to drink,
listening to Brahms and squeezing orange
juice. when I'm too sick to drink you
know I'm sick. I didn't even buy
tomorrow's Racing Form. now there's
some Sibelius on the radio and
in the apartment house on the
corner a woman screams as a
man beats her.

there's nothing on tv. it's moments like this that
the madhouses are better understood. I've even
rolled a joint now. I found some old stuff in
the closet.

when Sibelius reached 40 he shaved
all the hair from his head, walk-
ed into his house and never
came out again until they
came for him.

sick at the age of 57 I sit listening to
the music and smoking this poor joint
while I plan a comeback.

sick on a Friday night I understand very little. but I
like the lamplight and my cigar box keeps saying over
and over to me: mentel charutos pimentel charutos
pimentel charuto entel charutos pimentel charutos
pimen ...

the woman screams again as the man
beats her. he calls her a whore.
what is he doing living with
a whore?